

In the matter of the continued requirement of morse code testing for certain classes of amateur radio licensing:

I support the removal of the morse testing requirement from the necessary testing to obtain any amateur radio license. Morse code was one of the few ways a message could be assured of reaching its destination clearly and quickly when the rules requiring its demonstrated proficiency were put into place. Today, however, it is slow and takes valuable time compared to some of the methods of communication now available to amateur operators which favorably compare to and even surpass the advantages of morse code.

In the regulations outlining the role of amateur radio, one of the tenants is to maintain a pool of trained operators who could be called upon during times of emergency or disaster. Since no other service utilizes morse code with the possible exception of military special forces operators, it is no longer necessary to maintain a pool of trained morse operators. It is clear that morse code should be maintained as a pleasurable operating mode but not as a requirement to licensing.

The commission itself stated it would be best to maintain the morse code requirement just to a point to comply with the ITU standards. Since the ITU no longer requires morse proficiency and has changed its guidelines to allow the individual countries to determine the continuation of testing for morse proficiency, it is now entirely feasible to eliminate Element 1 from the amateur testing schedule.

I urge the commission to do so for all classes of amateur radio licenses, while maintaining or increasing the remaining testing requirements now in place for the various amateur radio licenses.